

## The economy of Political of Media on the News on the 2017 Banten Governor Election (Case of Radar Banten and Baraya TV)

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### Abstract

Mass media, both print and broadcast (TV and radio), play an essential role in disseminating critical messages to the public/community. Because the media in the current era has become an economic and political commodity because of its function and ownership, which is owned by individuals (owners of capital). This positions the media and processes as disseminators of information and motivates for-profit and political interests. This article discusses the position of the local Press in Banten, namely Radar Banten and Baraya TV. In the euphoria of the gubernatorial election, these two media inevitably convey political messages. At the same time, these two media will try to make a profit just like an economic institution. How is the positioning of these two media, which have the function of disseminating information and education but simultaneously practicing economic and political activities? Are these two media able to maintain independence?

**Keywords:** Economy of Politic, Profit Motif, Media Independence.

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## I. Introduction

"Mass media is a class that arrange". Such is the premise of the Marxist theory of the position of the media in the modern capitalist system (Sudibyo, 2004). The mass media is believed to be a medium of message traffic between social elements in society and functions as a means of subjugation and coercion of conventions by economically and politically dominant groups. Through the pattern of ownership and the products presented, the media is an ideological tool that perpetuates the domination of the financier class over the public, who are treated solely as consumers, and against those who have the power to regulate pro-market regulations.

History shows, the mass media on finally reached the pinnacle of development as a unique institution in modern society. The mass media can present themselves as the main public space and determine social, political, and cultural dynamics at local and global levels. Media has also become the main advertising media that can generate an economic surplus by carrying out the world's liaison between production and consumption.

However, it's almost always too late that the mass media, on the other hand, also propagate or strengthen specific economic and political structures. The Press has social and economic functions and carries out ideological positions. Therefore, the media phenomenon requires observations based on economic approaches and political approaches (Sudibyo, 2004).

## II. Literature Review

As the method proposed by Robert W. McChesney, the political economy includes two aspects. First, as an address that connects the media with the communication system in a social structure. In other words, it examines how media (and communication systems) and content mutually reinforce, challenge, or influence existing classes (society stratification) and social relations.

Second, the economy of political communication show specificity in how ownership, performance drives or mechanisms (e.g. advertising), and government policies affect media behaviour and content (news or information in the media). (Wulandari, 2017).

As a society that starts to grow and move "economically", usually community participation has not been spread evenly. Society, in general, is more passive. Furthermore, other groups that are smaller and less are active. In a relatively new society to development, both economically and politically, the role of elite groups was initially an excellent stimulus for the development of other community participation. They (read: the masses) expect the actions of the select group to provide encouragement and an influential role and influence the society of non-elite groups. So, like it or not, under certain conditions, these elite groups do not become a serious "problem" for the

community. Because, as stated by Gaetano Mosca, the select group was believed to be a "strong" and economically dominant group of people in the beginning. And then, they will also explore their influence in the political field (Wijaya, 1988).

It's always interesting to see how the role of the media in the economic and political structure of a country. One principle to note is that, in a capitalist system, the mass media should be given adequate attention, as are other institutions of production and distribution. The conditions found at the level of media ownership, reporting practices, dynamics of the radio, television, film, and advertising industries have a mutually determining relationship with the specific political-economic conditions that develop in a country. And in turn, also influenced by global political economy conditions Sudibyo (Nashrudin P., 2016). One of the main issues in recent modern communication discourse is a pattern of ownership and practice of producing and distributing media products concentrated in large business groups.

On the one hand, media concentration is considered unavoidable when the global situation calls for efforts that lead to consolidation and convergence in the modern media business. But on the other hand, the concentration of media also raises many paradoxes related to the function of the media as a public space with many parts inherent in it. The robust structure of the media industry is the final stage in the evolutionary cycle towards modern industrial institutions (Sudibyo, 2013).

Responding to media phenomena, this phenomenon of media independence, especially local media, will soon appear "a thousand and one" questions. It was considering the positioning of local media *vis-a-vis* the authorities (read: local government). This phenomenon of local media independence deviation will be easier to see during regional head elections (Pemilukada). The first relevant question raised is, is it still possible for us to get independent media during the competition for regional head candidates, such as the governor election in Banten Province. In media and political relations,

Media independence is one of the genres in political communication that views the media as the fourth branch of power (fourth state). The media must be independent so that the other three power components receive adequate supervision. If the media takes sides or is co-opted by other branches of power, indeed, its function as a watchdog is challenging to carry out. Thus democratic life will run lame. Such is the basic premise of the genre. The problem is, when the concentration of ownership of capital in the media industry is increasingly strengthened, journalism was increasingly threatened to become just a business, merchandise. Rupert Murdoch has become a well-known symbol of how the global media business has increasingly cornered journalism as merchandise. In Indonesia, especially Banten, a similar phenomenon can be seen in the Jawapos group (in Banten Jawa Pos has a chain, through its subsidiary Wahana Semesta Banten, which is the holding company for Radar Banten, Baraya Pos and Baraya TV). The orientation of journalism has also changed drastically in the last two decades. Currently, market-driven journalism forces media workers, especially journalists, to be just one of the

screws in the production process to produce news. The types of information are getting more uniform, and the entertainment aspect is getting more dominant. Serious investigative reports are getting less and less.

The question then arises amid the concentration of mass media capital ownership and an increasingly market-driven orientation to journalism; can we expect the independence of our local media to emerge in responding to the 2017 Banten governor election? Conflict of interest of capital owners Media affiliated with certain politicians should not corner journalists solely as campaign officers. In Foucault's terminology (Eriyanto, 2005), the power to spread discourse among the public, held by the mass media, should be used first for the public interest. This research raises the role and the function of the media in the political economy perspective. The conception of political economy initially began with efforts to support capitalist acceleration, which rejected the mercantilist political system, which was considered ineffective and inefficient in the 18th century. Historically, Palgrave defined political economy as studying human well-being and the pursuit of fulfilment (supply and desire fulfilment). For that reason, it is interesting to raise this "sexy" issue in the title of *Media Political Economy: In the News Ahead of the 2017 Banten Governor Election* by Radar Banten and Baraya TV. This research aims to get information about (1) How are Media Relations and power are in the practice of political economy; (2) How is the practice of Media political economy (Baraya TV and Radar Banten) is in maintaining neutrality and professionalism.

### III. Methodology

This study uses a qualitative. Qualitative research is a research process to understand social problems or human problems, based on creating a complete holistic picture formed in words, reporting informants' views in detail and arranged in a natural setting (Creswell, 2014).

According to Fraenkel & Wallen, qualitative research focuses on the ongoing process. Researchers are primarily interested in understanding how things happen. Meanwhile, according to Lincoln & Guba, qualitative research is a design that develops in terms of results. Understanding and interpretation are negotiated with human data sources because it is the subject's reality that researchers want to understand (Creswell, 2014). At the same time, the research paradigm used is constructivist.

The constructivist paradigm rejects the positivist/empirical view that separates the object from the subject. The central factor of research and its social relations. Subject, according to the US. Hikam (Moeleong, 2006) can control specific intentions in every discourse. Language is understood as something that is regulated and animated by purposeful statements. Each statement is an act of creating meaning, namely the act of self-formation and self-disclosure of the speaker. Discourse in the constructivist

paradigm is an attempt to reveal the hidden intentions of the subject who put forward a statement. The disclosure is done, among others, by placing oneself in the speaker's position with interpretation following the structure of the meaning of the speaker.

Data collection methods other than Observing texts and news/information is certainly not enough to make observations. However, the prevalence of qualitative methods is by conducting in-depth interviews (depth? interviews). The data that has been collected in this study uses a qualitative research approach by analyzing the text of the election campaign news.

According to Patton (Moeleong, 2006), data analysis is arranging data sequences and organizing data into patterns, categories, and fundamental units of description. From this understanding, Patton distinguishes between data analysis and interpretation, namely giving significant meaning to the study, explaining the pattern of explanation, and looking for relationships between the dimensions of the description.

## **IV. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1. Media relations and power in the practice of political economy, ahead of the 2017 Banten gubernatorial election.**

In terms of communication systems, local media and political-economic media practices do not influence media practice, at least through the binoculars through the course of journalism and media business at Baraya TV and Radar Banten. However, it is realized that the "closeness" of journalists to the leadership of certain political parties impacts advertising spots.

The closeness of journalists with figures In politics, according to the GM Baraya TV, the same thing that the Chief Editor of Radar Banten stated during an interview cannot be avoided. As long as they (read: Baraya TV journalists) can be objective and professional, it is not considered a problem. However, it would be better if journalists were not "too close" to certain political parties or figures because they feared it would affect the news. Furthermore, journalists should not carry out specific "framing" of certain political figures or political parties or officials.

So local media intensely often create a reality that is owned and experienced subjectively. This subjectivity arises, especially if there are demands for pragmatism from media institutions that a journalist must meet. Its form is the motive of interest at the individual level, including political (partisan). This motive makes the news process work no longer based on ethical and professional foundations but political grounds. Political motives can be a spirit and determine the direction of a report.

The process is policy-based media editors who want a frame based on the media's internal interests. An individual or a journalist constructs social reality and reconstructs

it in the world of reality while at the same time strengthening that reality based on the interests of the media institution. This is also reinforced by their educational background, religion, gender, ethnicity, all of which influence journalists in producing coverage (media content). As a result, the media is stuck in the trial by the Press sooner or later.

After the birth of Law no. 40/1999 of the Press, all strengthened the discourse on press freedom. The Press then began to be directed towards their social responsibility roles. Both as a system and as a fourth function in the pillars of democracy. The emergence of regional autonomy and local elections with various problems is expected to be balanced by the presence of local media. Because it negates the existence of the fourth pillar of democracy in regional areas. The local media is expected to read the possibilities that occur in the local political process based on the community context.

Of course, what is expected is not one of the candidates' names but the conditions that occurred. The public will not know candidates' credibility, capability, or loyalty during the campaign season because we will not be able to see the candidate's ability. However, a comfortable and democratic condition is the hope of the people.

Thus, the construction of reality does not wake up in the area of excellence of the candidate. But on the issue of rationality and the full participation of the community in this political process. So that public control over the government is getting tighter, and the mass media is a forum for dialogue between these communities.

The local Press's existence is basically to build local wisdom in politics because the national Press will not do it. After all, it has to look at the condition of the reading community.

In implementing regional head elections, several regional head candidates, including Banten, intensively disseminated their profile, vision, mission, and programs. Various strategic issues that are considered capable of boosting popularity are highlighted, ranging from the sentiments of native sons of the region, achievements as officials in the current regime, poverty alleviation programs, and superior rankings in opinion polls.

In approaching the public, almost all candidates use local print and electronic media. Understandably, the media can reach a broader target audience than conventional methods, such as public meetings, placing banners, billboards, or sticking stickers. We saw that various socializations for regional head candidates were packaged in display advertisements and news advertorials, and interactive dialogues involving several private radio and television stations. It is not unusual for a candidate for regional head to become the sole sponsor of a youth talent contest broadcast on local television.

The moment of the General Election creates a mutual relationship benefit between local media and candidates for regional heads. The media interprets the need for each

candidate for socialization as a golden opportunity to earn income to strengthen or even maintain their existence amid intense competition in the local media business.

At first glance, such a relationship is something. This is a common occurrence between a service provider and its client, as in other service transactions. However, the problem becomes different when it is remembered that the media carries out a natural social control function.

In the context of the General Election, the public, I hope that the local media will be able to critically examine the background of each candidate for regional authority and the programs it offers so that the public has sufficient accurate knowledge to make the right choice in the voting booth. The assumptions underlying public expectations are simple; local media are considered to know or should best understand the intricacies of local problems.

Unfortunately, instead of being a bodyguard democracy at the local level, the local media often flirt with potential power holders. The benefits that are obtained and continue to be expected from the candidates for regional authorities both during the socialization period and when they later serve make the local media often lenient and even facilitative towards the interests of regional head candidates. Instead of submitting reports by the philosophy that bad news is good news for the public interest, we observe that so many local media are competing to present the best and most beautiful about the political elite who are their clients. A series of programs, ranging from talk shows to interactive dialogues, all have the same ending: praise for the candidate. As long as a candidate can establish a "good relationship" with the media, the candidate can determine what he wants to post, how the coverage about himself should be packaged and so on.

In short, the media has two roles. First, the media can influence institutional policies. Second, the media can be used as a catalyst or neutralizer when there is a conflict of institutional change. This reinforces the belief that the media plays an essential role in political institutions.

Whether political institutions, government and other powers will always be interested in the mass media. This cannot be avoided because the Press is the most effective tool for hegemony and influencing society. On the other hand, the independence of the mass media must be maintained as one of the pillars of democracy.

Politics will continuously pursue authority to expand its power. Authority is part of power. Authority is the legally protected power to exercise control over others. Authority has legitimacy so that it can then make people willing to accept policies and recognize the state's authority as the owner of power. Jack Snyder (2003) sees the positive role that local media can play, such as educator, problem identifier, forum provider, and socio-cultural revitalizer for their community.

Robert Dahl called the role of a free press "the availability of alternative and independent sources of information". This leading role is in synergy with the principles of good local governance, such as participation, transparency, and accountability at the local level. Participation means the active part of the community in decision making. Clarity is based on the existence of a mechanism to guarantee public access for decision making. Meanwhile, accountability states how effective the influence of the governed party (object) is on the government (subject).

Meanwhile, Keane (1991: 116-117) underscores the importance of the media as a public servant who has a significant role in a democratic country. This contribution mainly concerns the availability of helpful information for public life (Mansour, 2005).

In addition to contributing to guarantee the democratization process, on the one hand, local media also has an ambivalent effect due to the substantial value of primordialism and the sociocultural-economic closeness of media investors with regional stakeholders, which causes local media to also have a dilemmatic position, for example in coverage of the Regional Head General Election (in the Institute for Press and Development Studies (Institute for Press and Development Studies). LSPP), 2005), Synder (2003) with his various studies even concluded that the local Press could inflame short-term interests, primarily because in the early days of democratization of the media, an atmosphere of free opinion prevailed, the Press was easier to establish, and all of them could be a tool for power maniacs to elevate his position.

In other words, the local Press sometimes fails to keep their distance and get involved emotionally with the dynamics of socio-political competition and conflict in their area. As a result, the coverage becomes less balanced. On the other hand, market pressures, both in the form of intense competition between the media and the public's thirst for news sensationalism demands, often cloud the process and face of local press coverage (Priatna, 2017).

#### **4.2. Economy of Politic of Media (Baraya TV and Radar Banten): Neutrality and Professionalism**

Prerequisites for realizing the process of democratization are freedom of expression and information. Therefore a subsystem in the form of an independent mass media is needed. They start with providing correct, relevant, and objective information for the community to supervise power. The notion of power in a democratic society is not only oriented to government power. Still, it has a reasonably broad scope which includes political, social, economic, and cultural activities. This is in sync with what was stated by Schieck (on Lembaga Studi Pers dan Pembangunan (LSPP), 2005) that the presence of an independent media could lead to two roles; First, being a "watchdog" for the government. Second, educate the public on various issues that affect their daily lives.

This interaction is seen in many sectors of life. In a more political context, for example, elections, according to a survey by The Asia Foundation released in 2004, more than 90

per cent of the public use the media as a source of information on general elections (Nashrudin P., 2017). This large number is certainly very open to media abuse as a means of "flirting" between media owners and regional political elites, starting from transactional agreements to provide political advertising space, covering the inauguration of provincial officials, to publications that blow up election campaign activities. This condition is even worse if the media owner or a strong person in the media organization structure is one of the candidates for the Regional Head General Election. The Press becomes an apparatus of temporary interest to mobilize constituents in their community areas. It is clear from these forms of deviation, and the Press can no longer function as the traditional conception of the Press: the fourth assembly of democracy.

The fourth pillar (the fourth estate) does not mean that the Press must position itself in "opposition" to the government or "against" the government. The position of the Press in the fourth assembly concept is the same as the parliament, which emphasizes the nature of independence or freedom to disseminate information and opinions without obstacles from the government. The Press is only legally responsible to the courts and ethically responsible to journalists' organizations (Muis, 2000).

The tug of war between the Press with local elites and abuse of the function of the local Press in the regional head election process may occur due to several reasons stemming from the lack of professionalism. Press professionalism can be indicated from three levels: micro, meso, and macro. Although sometimes the distinction between these three levels is unclear because they overlap and are linked to each other, the above categorization can facilitate the discussion in simple terms.

First, the micro level, namely the product, the end of the media in the form of content or text, which is seen from the news presented. The unprofessionalism of the local Press is especially evident from various news reports about the process of organizing regional head elections, which are shown to be less balanced. It is clear from research released by LSPP in 2005 on the issue of transparency (corruption) and public services to 8 local print media in 4 regions (Lampung, West Java, West Kalimantan, West Nusa Tenggara) showing that local newspapers are still highly dependent on local authorities. This condition narrows the space for print media as a power controller (Lembaga Studi Pers dan Pembangunan (LSPP), 2005) (Nashrudin P., 2017).

In the previous year's research (2004), LSPP conducted monitoring of 1,136 news stories from 10 leading Indonesian newspapers in the period 11-25 March 2004. The results obtained concluded that the media did not pay attention to the principle of balance (cover both sides) in presenting news. Issues around KKN and efforts to reform the military, for example, or the case of the Regional Representatives Council where there are thousands of candidates, received only very minimal coverage compared to other events reported (Luwarso on Nashrudin P., 2017)).

Whereas theoretically, professionalism in the news requires some conditions, especially objectivity. In this conception that tends to be positivistic, the definition of objectivity is formulated in two principles, namely conformity to reality (factuality) and impartiality (impartiality). The principle of factuality consists of two elements, namely actual (truth) and relevant (relevance). The accuracy determines the element of truth in describing the facts. The truth will be vital if it is accompanied by accuracy in all news elements (5W+1H). This accuracy in practice requires the completeness of various instruments (Kusumaningrat, 2005).

Meanwhile, the elements that are used to measure include: (1) psychographic proximity, (2) geographical proximity, (3) timeliness, (4) significance, (5) promotion? nence and (6) magnitude (Kusumaningrat, 2005). These items are known as news values. The principle of impartiality (impartiality) also determines the level of objectivity. Two elements support impartiality, namely balance and neutrality. Balance gives a fair place to different views, often referred to as covering both sides, while neutral means that there must be a separation between facts and journalists' personal opinions (*McQuail ' s Mass Communication Theory*, n.d.,2000).

Revealing facts with objectivity According to the elements mentioned above, the media will automatically become a watchdog against various abuses, both at the state level and at the national level (state) and society (public), including individuals. In this condition, people will think and decide what is right and what is wrong. The Press does not need to dictate or direct, it is enough to reveal the facts as they are, and the public is the one who makes the judgment.

Second, an indication of the professionalism of the Press local can be seen from the meso element. This aspect includes the dynamics of producing and consuming media texts. The striking thing in this discussion is the weakness of local press management with incompetent and unprofessional human resources. In addition, this weak media management also leads to the common welfare of local journalists, who in many cases are paid below the minimum wage. Some regional journalists only get press cards without a fixed salary from the media (see Lembaga Studi Pers dan Pembangunan (LSPP), 2005). In other cases, the establishment of the Press is a local elite's political agenda with a mission to make the media a mouthpiece to defend their interests. This can be seen from the names of the local political elites listed in the masthead (editorial structure) of newspapers.

Lack of professionalism of the local Press is also shown from the condition of journalists who do not have the competence and idealism so that they only make local media institutions a place to seek profit. The mutual collaboration of journalists with local governments leads to agreements that deviate from journalistic ideals and ethics legalized in the regional government budget (APBD), starting from the maintenance costs of the PWI building, this training, to sponsoring this training several fictitious activities for journalists. This is what should be abolished in the local government budget

and rejected by journalists. The abolition of the post can place the Press in a proportional position as an independent institution.

Third, indications to see the pros-Local press professionalism is at a macro level which refers to socio-cultural dynamics, political economy, historical context, and media regulation. The conspicuous issue from the macro aspect is the unclear rules of the game for the local Press in articulating its functions. The lack of firm ethics enforcement, who imposes sanctions and what sanctions are carried out in the event of a violation does not seem to have been fully accommodated by the various legal systems in our country, in the sense that it is weak in the enforcement aspect, not in the sound of the articles of legislation.

On the other hand, from a historical point of view, the popularity of the local Press also does not entirely depart from the basis of contemplative thinking for the benefit of the public, but rather as a trend, even the euphoria of freedom, which at a certain point was not understood by both press managers and the media public themselves. This drives the need for an independent media watchdog to alert the Press in case of misappropriation. In addition, media education is needed for the community through media literacy education so that they are not only passive objects of the media but have an awareness of their role as active stakeholders who have the right to be involved in producing and distributing information.

In Time Magazine, Henry Gunward once wrote the jargon: no democracy without free Press (Republika, 26 May 1999). This statement is in line with President Thomas Jefferson's prevalent speech: "If I were asked to choose between a government without a free press and a free press without a government, I would choose a free press without a government".

Amid the spirit of decentralization and freedom of information, especially with the enactment of Law no. 14 of 2008 concerning Public Information Disclosure (Retnowati, 2012);(Henovanto et al., 2020). The more awakening the local press industry to give new contributions and colour to the tradition of media and democratic life in Indonesia. However, the landscape of media life, especially in the local sphere, still shows a jumble of intertwined and complicated issues to unravel. The neutrality of the local Press in regional head elections (Pemilukada), for example, or its existence which prioritizes economic functions over informative-educational aspects for the local public are the two main issues that arise and even have the potential to reduce the role of the Press; Instead of being the fourth pillar (fourth estate) that oversees the democratization process, it functions as an extension of the regional "kings" who support the interests of short-term power, tribal nationalism, and local primordialism.

According to a survey by The Asia Foundation issued in 2004, more than 90 per cent of the public use the media as a source of general election information (Lembaga Studi Pers dan Pembangunan (LSPP), 2005). This large number is certainly very open to media

abuse as a means of "flirting" between media owners and regional political elites, starting from transactional agreements to provide political advertising space, covering the inauguration of provincial officials, to publications that blow up election campaign activities. This condition worsens if the media owner or a strong person in the media organizational structure is one of the candidates for the Regional Head General Election. What happened was none other than the local Press becoming a temporary interest apparatus to mobilize constituents in the electoral district. It is clear from these forms of deviation, and the Press can no longer function as the traditional conception of the Press: the fourth assembly of democracy, which means the press is a pillar of control of power.

It's not strange amid the spirit of decentralization and freedom of information carried out after the 1998 reform movement; the rise of the local media industry has contributed to the tradition of media and democratic life in Indonesia. No exception in Banten.

Based on these signals, there are 3 (three) things become the central concern: First, a theoretical review of media relations, democracy, and the process towards democratization in the local sphere. Second, as a response to the implementation of regional autonomy, the media plays a vital role as a mediator of information between political leaders and their constituents, so the discussion about media neutrality in regional head elections is essential to put forward. Moreover, the dynamics of the local media industry in the country after the New Order show how the attraction of interest between the media, local government, and advertisers (including the government, which also often plays an advertiser position) in the process of constructing political news presented by local media. Third, the importance of the role of local media in the democratization process in Indonesia and providing an alternative offer of how local media should be formatted in the future, both as a democratic subsystem and as a pillar of the industry.

The rise of local media or media The regional government was a simultaneous reaction to the 1998 political reforms. The reform movement succeeded in pushing for at least two significant changes—first, the era of press freedom which replaced the tyrannical-authoritative government through the licensing regime. Second, the fundamental shift from reform is the regional autonomy plan that carries the principle of decentralization. The policies outlined in Law Number 32 /2004 (Law Number 32 of 2004 Concerning Local Government, 2004) have two goals that cannot be separated from the role of the media: (1) political goals and (2) organizational goals. The political objective is to position the local government as a medium of political education for the regional level community, contributing to national level political education to accelerate the realization of civil society.

While the administrative purposes of position the local government as a government unit at the local level that functions to provide public services effectively, efficiently, and gives better results than the government before the reform of locality to self-determination or local democracy (Fatima, 2004).

The two elementary changes above encourage local media to articulate the community's information needs while at the same time filling the market niche. Given the diverse conditions of society, local media were born with diversity. The function of decentralization and local autonomy for regional media is demonstrated by the ability to accommodate the plurality of aspirations of the local community-community. The decentralization of the media has given rise to political variety, which is very useful for channelling and adjusting local voices and local choices.

## V. Conclusion

Democracy means independent pen dence and autonomy. In other words, political life is supported by various institutions with freedom and independence but synergize. In this condition, the presence of the press media is necessary (*condition sine qua non*). The existence of the local Press as a subsystem of the political arena at the local level requires a strong foundation of professionalism and idealism. Without professionalism, the press media will not gain public trust. The development of the local Press must be interpreted wisely by media stakeholders so that the function of "empowering" (empowering) the community through the media does not change its meaning to become "Deceiving" (disempowering) as the euphoria of press freedom at the beginning of the reform era some time ago: "The important thing is to publish, other matters later".

On the other hand, as a business institution, the local Press must also improve the quality of media management, which can nourish the company and enhance the welfare of the media workers concerned. The onslaught of competition with other media will also test the extent of the existence of the regional Press in the future. In response, the increase in managerial capacity must be carried out through various intensive education and training. The existence of local media as a subsystem

The political arena at the local level requires a strong foundation of professionalism and idealism. Without professionalism, the media will not gain public trust. On the other hand, as a business institution, local media must also improve the quality of media management, which can nourish the company and enhance the welfare of the media workers concerned (Mansour, 2005). The onslaught of competition with other media will also test the extent of the existence of regional media in the future. In responding to this, increased managerial capacity must be carried out through professionalism. Finally, the reading public should also strive to improve their understanding of media literacy. So that it can increase appreciation and participation in media healthily and critically, this is to encourage the creation of an excellent local government in the true sense, namely ensuring participation, transparency, and accountability.

The power of the media is so mighty in spreading the flow of information quickly and widely. The candidates use the mass media to socialize the political agenda. The

sweetness of data will automatically anaesthetize the public through the mass media that has been set. This is closely related to the hypodermic needle theory (hypodermic needle), which is a classical theory regarding the process of mass media effects. In this theory, the media content is viewed as a drug injected into the audience's vein, which is assumed to react as expected.

The media have power that is significant in producing and reproducing political images and media content as constructed reality, as Tuchman (on Severin J, 2007) argues. Therefore, the formulation "Who controls the media will rule the world" relates to the Regional Head General Election context. The candidate who can control public opinion will have more chances to win.

The independence and neutrality of the media, in this case, Radar Banten, rather than Baraya TV, is questionable. Instead of promoting media professionalism, local media seem more inclined to act as economic institutions by prioritizing financial practices through advertising spots (campaigns) that get bigger and more "loose" space.

Seeing this kind of condition, it seems the media economy phenomenon reveals its true face. In a sense, the media are relatively difficult to carry out their journalistic duties consistently with the assessment of impartiality by some parties. Utilization of the opportunity to obtain a "niche" of advertising is quite dominant. This is considered something that is often encountered in the local media phenomenon, especially during the General Election.

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